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INFO RUEHZN/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM PREL PGOV HR OSCE

SUBJECT: OSCE HDIM: NO ISSUES TO RAISE FOR CROATIA

REF: STATE 60838

(SBU) In response to reftel, Post believes the Government of Croatia generally respects the human rights of its citizens. Basic freedoms such as democratic elections, freedom of religion, and freedom of press exist within the country. The judicial system suffered from a case backlog, and trials do not always meet the highest standard. Corruption and transparency are also particularly problematic areas for the government. Societal violence and discrimination against ethnic minorities, particularly Serb and Roma, remains a problem, but the government has taken some steps to address these issues, and the number and severity of ethnically based incidents have steadily decreased. Implementation of the five year old Constitutional Law on National Minorities remained spotty, resulting in continued discrimination in the hiring of ethnic minorities, particularly Serbs, at the local public administrative level. On these issues, Post will continue engagement with the GOC bilaterally.

Bradtke